

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 03580 042015Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02
/060 W

-----042213Z 027473 /70

P R 041820Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3149
INFO AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL FLORENCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3580

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT, US
SUBJECT: ITALIAN EXPECTATIONS OF CHANGE IN US POLICY TOWARDS
ITALY

1. THERE CURRENTLY EXISTS IN ITALY A HIGH LEVEL OF EXPECTATION OF A CHANGE IN THE DIRECTION OF AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION. THIS EXPECTATION HAS BEEN FUELED BY THE INAUGURATION OF A NEW ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON AND THE IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF A NEW AMERICAN AMBASSADOR.

2. AS EARLY AS LAST SUMMER, THE LEFTIST ORIENTED PRESS AND COMMENTATORS IN ITALY BEGAN TO SUGGEST THAT A CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATIONS IN AMERICA WOULD TRIGGER A BASIC READJUSTMENT OF US POLICIES REGARDING THE POLITICAL SCENE. ONE NEED ONLY POINT TO THE DELIBERATE EDITING OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS ON THE ITALIAN PLITICAL SITUATION DURING AN ITALIAN TV INTERVIEW LAST SUMMER TO SHOW AN EXAMPLE OF HOW A NUMBER OF ITALIAN PRESS AND OPINION MOLDERS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION THAT A NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION WOULD TAKE A RADICALLY DIFFERENT STANCE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 03580 042015Z

TOWARDS THE IDEA OF PCI ENTRY INTO AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. SINCE ELCTIONS DAY, THIS TREND HAS CENTINUED. WE HAVE RECENTLY SEEN ARTICLES IN WHICH JOURNALISTS HAVE EQUATED PRESIDENT CARTER'S INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND IN REVISING AMERICAN VISA LAWS WITH A MAJOR REVISION IN AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD THE PCI. IN SUM LEFTIST SYMPATHIZERS CONTINUE TO SUGGEST REGULARLY THAT THE

WINDS BLOWING FROM AMERICA INDICATE THE USG, AT THE VERY LEAST, IS IN THE PROCESS OF A REORIENTATION OF ITS "ITALIAN POLICY", ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO THE PCI.

3. WE ARE ENCOUNTERING WIDE SPREAD PERPLEXITY AND CONCERN AMONG DEMOCRATIC OPINION AND DECISION-MAKERS AS THE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN OF THE LEFT BEGINS TO FIND CREDIBILITY IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY CLEAR SIGNS FROM THE AMERICAN SIDE. MOST TROUBLING TO THESE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF ITALIAN SOCIETY IS THE FEAR THAT THE USG MIGHT MAKE A MOVE OR A SERIES OF MOVES THAT COULD TIP THE DELICATE BALANCE NOW EXISTING HERE TO FAVOR THE PCI. FOR EXAMPLE, IN A CONVERSATION WITH AN EMBOFF SEVERAL DAYS AGO, SOCIALIST SENATOR ALDO AJELLO EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT A US OPENING TO THE PCI WOULD BE SEEN AS AN ACCEPTANCE OF THE PARTY AS THE PRIMARY VOICE OF THE ITALIAN LEFT TO THE SEVERE DETRIMENT OF THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY. SIMILARLY, IN A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH THE CHARGE, A NUMBER OF LEADING ITALIAN JOURNALISTS STRESSED THEIR CONCERN OVER RUMORS CIRCULATING IN ROME OF AN IMPENDING CHANGE IN THE USG'S POLICIES REGARDING ITALY WHICH COULD HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION. WE HAVE RECEIVED SIMILAR APPROACHES FROM OTHERS (PRINCIPALLY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS) IN RECENT DAYS WHO HAVE ESSENTIALLY BEEN SEEKING ASSURANCES THAT THERE IS NO FOUNDATION TO THE SUGGESTIONS BEING SPREAD BY SUPPORTERS OR SYMPATHIZERS OF THE PCI.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 03580 042015Z

4. THE DEGREE TO WHICH SOME ELEMENTS ARE READY TO MISREPRESENT OR DISTORT THE AMERICAN POSITION AND THE EXTENT OF THE CONCERN BEING EXPRESSED BY THOSE WHO FORESEE THE DANGERS THAT COULD RESULT FROM IT, INDICATE HOW US ATTITUDES CONTINUE TO INFLUENCE THE POLITICAL EQUATION HERE. LIKE IT OR NOT, THE ITALIANS WILL SIMPLY NOT LET US REMAIN SILENT OR NEUTRAL BECAUSE THEY ATTRIBUTE TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE TO OUR STANCE. AND IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT PCI SYMPATHIZERS WOULD BE SEEKING TO GAIN MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE, TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES, FROM ANY AMBIGUITY AS TO WHERE WE REALLY STAND ON THE ISSUE OF COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. ACCORDINGLY, WE CONCLUDE THAT SILENCE AND AMBIGUITY REGARDING US ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION, PARTICULARLY AS THEY RELATE TO THE PCI, COULD IN THE LONG RUN SEVERELY DAMAGE OUR INTERESTS HERE. WE BELIEVE THAT A MECHANISM MUST BE FOUND TO EXPRESS FORTHRIGHTLY THE CONTINUITY OF OUR BASIC

POLICY TOWARDS ITALY IN MANNER IN WHICH THE
INEVITABLE CHARGES OF AMERICAN INTERFERENCE IN
ITALIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS CAN BE MINIMIZED. FROM OUR
VANTAGE POINT THIS COULD BEST BE DONE IN THE
COURSE OF CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY, OR OF A MAJOR ADDRESS BY A
SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE DEPARTMENT, OR IN CONNECTION WITH THE
GABUGGIANI VISA CASE. THE TIMING OF THESE REMARKS IS, OF COURSE,
IMPORTANT SINCE THE LONGER WE REMAIN SILENT, LEAVING THE
DISTINCT IMPRESSION OF A VAGUENESS IN OUR POLICY,
THE GREATER ARE THE RISKS TO OUR INTERESTS.
IF THE MATTER IS NOT DEALT WITH PREVIOUSLY, IT IS CERTAIN TO
BE PRESSED WITH AMBASSADOR GARDNER AS SOON AS HE ARRIVES IN
ITALY. BEAUDRY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ROME03580
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770075-0827
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770392/aaaaddap.tel
Line Count: 129
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 96b5adbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3206084
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ITALIAN EXPECTATIONS OF CHANGE IN US POLICY TOWARDS ITALY
TAGS: PINT, IT, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/96b5adbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009